

**National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)
Minority Business Resource Advisory Committee (MBRAC) Meeting
February 17-18, 2005
Goddard Space Flight Center
Greenbelt, MD**

Minutes

The NASA Minority Business Resource Advisory Committee (MBRAC) met on February 17-18, 2005, at Goddard Space Flight Center, in Greenbelt, MD. The meeting convened with Mr. Tull, Chair, asking Mr. Hames for a Roll Call. The following members were in attendance:

Mr. Knox W. Tull., P.E.	Mr. R. Gillem Lucas
Mr. Joseph Casas	Mr. Adrian S. Marsh, Jr.
Vice Chair	
Mr. Ralph C. Thomas, III	Mr. Harold Stinger
Executive Secretary	
Mr. Lamont Hames	Ms. Irma L. Tuder
Assistant Executive Secretary	
Dr. Milton R. Bryant	Mr. Wendell Maddox
Mr. Charles (Chuck) Gray	Mr. Roody Rosales
Mr. C. Daniel Harris	

The following members were not present:

Ms. Olga Martinez	Ms. Gloria Redman
Ms. Susan Au Allen, Esq.	Mr. Jay Reddy
Ms. Anita Williams	Dr. Ernie Wu

Mr. Thomas read the minutes of the previous MBRAC Meeting held September 8-9, 2004, at NASA Headquarters, in Washington, DC. Following Mr. Thomas, Ms. Krista Paquin, Center Associate Director provided a welcome and overview of Goddard Space Flight Center. Ms. Paquin noted that GSFC is primarily responsible for the study of the Earth from a low earth orbit and many small businesses support their mission.

Ms. Rosa Acevedo, Small Business Specialist, for GSFC, provided an overview of Goddard's Small Business Program (Attachment A). In brief, Ms. Acevedo, reported that that GSFC leads among most NASA Centers in prime contract dollars to small business and 8(a) firms. She added that some of the Agency's largest 8(a) contracts are awarded by GSFC and considered those contracts to be contracts for "mature" 8(a) firms. Ms. Acevedo noted that some of the issues surrounding their program center around large dollar awards due to changing mission requirements and a streamlined procurement staff. As such, Ms. Acevedo suggested that small and minority businesses consider *Joint Venturing* with one-

another and that there was a recent success story at NASA Headquarters Peer Review Services Contract, which was awarded to a team that *Joint Ventured*. Mr. Hames asked Ms. Acevedo about GSFC performance in the area of subcontracting. Ms. Acevedo reported that the Center has come up short in their small disadvantaged business goals but were taking provisional steps to improve their performance.

Following Ms. Acevedo, Mr. Hames provided a Headquarters assessment of GSFC small business program. Mr. Hames reported that GSFC has more procurement actions than any other NASA Center and that they lead all Centers in total dollars to small businesses. Further, GSFC is near the top in awards to small disadvantaged businesses. He added that GSFC has improved significantly in collecting SF 294 and SF 295 reports, which is now at over ninety percent capture rate. Mr. Hames concluded that the major concern he has noticed is the significant increase in size of 8(a) contracts at GSFC. He stated that while it is notable to make these awards, on the opposite side of the issue is that it does not allow much for subcontracting opportunities to other smaller firms. Mr. Hames added that this creates a dilemma from an advocacy point of view. "Typically, forty-nine percent of these awards end up in the hands of large firms," stated Mr. Hames. Which is better, a single award to an 8(a) firm in the amount of tens of millions, or an full an open competitive award with significant subcontracting goals in all categories, which increases the number of opportunities to subcontract? It's a debate that MBRAC should consider addressing at some point," he continued.

After Mr. Hames' report, Mr. Thomas provided an Update of NASA's Small Business Program/Fiscal Year 2004 Performance Results (Attachment B). In summary, Mr. Thomas reported that NASA had a banner year in awards to small businesses. NASA awarded \$11.57 billion to business of which \$1.75 billion was awarded to small businesses prime contract awards, breaking it's previous record of \$1.71 billion, which it achieved in FY 2002. He added, with regard to 8(a) contractors, the agency awarded more dollars to those firms than ever before at \$546 million. This achievement represents a \$74 million increase over the firm's FY 03 totals and solidifies NASA's Federal-Wide #1 ranking among civilian agencies in that category. For 8(a) and non-8(a) small disadvantaged businesses combined, NASA also enjoyed record breaking total of \$940 million, which should also maintain NASA's #1 Federal-wide ranking among civilian agencies in that category.

Mr. Thomas continued that when he came to NASA in 1992, the Agency was struggling to get to eight percent, counting both prime and subcontracting dollars for small disadvantaged businesses. He added that we are now doing it with SDB's in prime contract dollars alone is a testament to the great progress we have made in this area. For women owned businesses (WOB's), NASA awarded \$322 million in prime contract dollars, \$524 million in subcontract dollars for a total sum of \$847 million to WOB's all of which are NASA's highest ever amounts in that category. The agency also more than doubled its prime contract dollars to Service

Disabled Veteran Owned Small Businesses from \$26.6 million in FY 03 to \$64.7 million in FY 04. Finally, he added that the agency now awaits the figures for its small business subcontract dollar figures, which he remains optimistic about.

Following discussion and a recap of the mornings meeting, the committee adjourned for lunch. After lunch, the committee resumed with Public Comment.

Mr. Tull then provided an update on the NASA Advisory Council (NAC). He reported that there was still discussion regarding the new organizational structure of the NAC and dividing it into two committees. Further, it was not clear when this would fully be implemented.

Following Mr. Tull, Dr. George Alcorn, Assistant Director for the Applied Engineering and Technology Directorate and GSFC Small Business Technical Advisor, provided an overview of his roles and responsibilities. He spoke a little about himself and career at GSFC and how he interacts with the small business office. The role of the Small Business Technical Advisor is to provide advice to the Small Business Procurement Center Representative and the Small Business Specialist when reviewing and determining the appropriate level of small business participation on contracts.

Following Dr. Alcorn, Mr. Thomas informed the committee of the Office of Management and Budget Memorandum (Attachment C) regarding the President's Executive Order 13360 to increase federal contracting and subcontracting opportunities for Service-Disabled Veteran businesses. Mr. Thomas stated that NASA reported and released its Agency Strategy for the implementation plan to significantly increase prime and subcontract dollars to service disabled veteran owned small businesses (Attachment D). He added that the application of this effective strategy to this group over the past two years has resulted in significant gains for Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSB's) in NASA contracting. For example, from FY 2003 to FY 2004 the agency more than doubled its prime contract dollars to SDVOSB from \$26.6 million in FY 03 to \$64.7 million in FY 04.

After Mr. Thomas' discussion regarding Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSB), Mr. Tull opened the meeting for discussion. A preponderance of the discussion centered around the following: shortage of qualified scientists and technical professionals to fulfill the needs of NASA; insufficient number of science and technology small disadvantaged and 8(a) firms to competitively support science and technology needs; the procurement advantage of Alaska Native Corporations (ANC) and tribally owned Native American Companies over other SDB's. Mr. Tull asked Mr. Lucas to take the lead on providing a position paper to further organize these positions.

Upon the conclusion of the open session, Mr. Tull adjourned the meeting for the afternoon.

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Day Two

Mr. Tull called the meeting to order and asked Mr. Hames to conduct the Roll Call.

Mr. Knox W. Tull., P.E.	Mr. R. Gillem Lucas
Mr. Joseph Casas	Mr. Adrian S. Marsh, Jr.
Vice Chair	
Mr. Ralph C. Thomas, III	Ms. Irma L. Tudor
Executive Secretary	
Mr. Lamont Hames	Dr. Ernie Wu
Assistant Executive Secretary	
Dr. Milton R. Bryant	Mr. Wendell Maddox
Mr. Charles (Chuck) Gray	Mr. R. Gillem Lucas

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Mr. C. Daniel Harris	Mr. Roody Rosales
Mr. Harold Stinger	Ms. Anita B. Williams
Ms. Susan Au Allen, Esq.	

Following the roll call, Mr. Thomas and Mr. Hames provided an update on upcoming activities and challenges. Mr. Hames provided an overview of the NASA/Jet Propulsion Laboratory High Tech Small Business Conference to be held in Los Angeles, CA and the newly created NASA Small Business Solutions Conference to be held in New York City. Mr. Thomas provided an overview of a series of Teaming Agreement courses he is presenting around the country based upon MBRAC's Model Principles of Effective Teaming Agreements.

Mr. Marsh indicated that MBRAC should develop similar Model Principals of Effective Joint Ventures since that mode of teaming appeared to growing among small businesses.

Following the updates, Mr. Tull opened the floor for additional discussion that continued from the previous day. Mr. Lucas provided a draft white paper (Attachment D) on the topics discussed and the committee discussed them openly. Following Mr. Lucas' report, the Panel provided a status of where their panels are going. Mr. Tull then adjourned the meeting.

I certify that the above is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Ralph C. Thomas, III
Executive Secretary

Date

Concur:

Mr. Knox W. Tull, Jr., P.E.
Chairperson
NASA Minority Business Advisory Committee